

CONVOY DISPATCH



44

VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975

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TDU Launches Campaign to Win Right to Vote on Any Dues Increase

Dues Hike Coming Down the Pike!

International Union officials are trying to impose the largest dues increase in Teamster history without a membership vote.

The International's plan will hike your dues by 25 percent beginning this summer — unless we act to stop it.

TDU has launched a national campaign and petition drive to demand a membership vote on any dues increase. We can win the Right to Vote if we act now!

As we go to press, the IBT Blue Ribbon Commission on Finances has issued a preliminary proposal to raise every members' dues by a half-hour's pay per month — an average hike of \$8 per month.

If you pay \$24 per month now, your dues will go up to \$30. If you pay \$40 per month now, your dues will go up to \$50.

The unprecedented dues hike is being sold as a way to finance higher strike benefits and more organizing. But most of the increase will not be used for either one of these purposes.

The proposal will raise an additional \$134 million per year in dues revenue, but only \$22 million of that will go to the strike fund.

Less than \$15 million will be earmarked for organizing. That leaves \$97 million in extra revenue that is unaccounted for. That's 73 percent of the dues increase!

IBT Gives Less for More

A dues increase of just \$2 per month would provide \$34 million per year, enough to fund a \$200 per week strike benefit. The International's plan will raise dues an average of \$8 per month, but will devote

only \$1.32 of that to a strike fund.

Under the current proposal, weekly strike benefits would be ten times the member's hourly wage, with a minimum of \$75 and a maximum of \$250. This multi-tier plan could create divisions on the picket line, with some strikers getting twice as much in benefits, while all are risking their jobs and on strike without income.

Big Perks = Big Dues Hike

International officials plan to deny us the Right to Vote on the dues hike at a Special Convention on April 30 in Las Vegas.

The Special Convention will be held in conjunction with two golf tournaments where Teamster officials will be golfing with Teamster employers. Our officials will be voting to raise our dues the same week that they golf with our bosses at a cost of \$1,200 from our dues.

The dues hike proposal will nearly double the International Union's income and pave the way for more salaries, perks and meetings at luxury resorts and country clubs.

More than 200 Teamster officials currently make more than \$100,000 a year paid for with your dues money.

The International Union currently pays multiple salaries to 140 officials and recently raised the daily meal allowance for officials to \$75 per day!

Demand Your Right to Vote

Every local union will send delegates to the Special Convention. Your local's delegates were chosen as part of last year's election for International Union officers.

More than 100 convention delegates, including many local officers, have already pledged to vote against any dues increase that will not be voted on by Teamster members.

Have the convention delegates



"I don't have a problem with a \$2 increase for a strike fund, or \$2 for organizing to build our membership."

"My complaint is with them throwing these big parties in Vegas and such, and with multiple salaries and pensions. If they want to raise our dues this much, I'd like them to open the books and give us a vote on it."

"I raise a family of five on \$36,000; I've been a Teamster for 14 years. Why does the president of my local need to make over \$140,000?"

Bob Linkenhoker
Local 355, Sysco
Baltimore

from your local union signed this pledge?

Teamster members across the country are circulating petitions demanding our Right to Vote on any dues hike, as well as taking other actions. (See article page 5 for what you can do.)

Contact TDU for information on how you can help stop the massive dues increase and develop a responsible plan that raises strike benefits for all Teamsters and increases funding for Teamster organizing without soaking the membership.

No Fat in TDU's Budget

TDU doesn't pay for any golf outings, multiple salaries, or special perks. Your \$35 a year in dues goes to informing the members and building Teamster reform. You can't get a better bargain than that!

JOIN TDU

TDU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Company _____

e-mail address _____

☐ City ☐ Road ☐ Dock ☐ Clerical ☐ Warehouse ☐ Construction ☐ Production

other _____

___ \$35 one-year membership & subscription to *Convoy Dispatch*.

___ \$85 three-year membership fee. (\$10 shall be rebated to the local chapter)

___ \$20 for spouses, and Teamsters who gross less than \$17,000 a year.

___ \$20 for retirees. Retired from Local _____

Check or money order

Mastercard/Visa # _____ Exp. date ____/____/____

Date _____ Signature _____

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

TDU membership is kept confidential. TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations only from Teamsters, retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers. Only funds from Teamster members and their spouses can be used for campaign purposes.

Letters From Our Members

Spin, PR, Talk and Little Action

The following letter was sent to Mike Mathis, head of IBT Government Affairs and DRIVE director in December 2001.

This is to inform you that I wish to withdraw my support for the DRIVE program at the IBT. I should have withdrawn after your support of Representative Hoekstra, but was hoping that a change of administration at the IBT would occur.

Despite Mr. Hoffa's rhetoric about his mandate, did anyone notice that the members are not voting? It should be hard to talk about mandates when 155,000 fewer Teamsters voted this year than in 1996. I believe this is the real story of the 2001 Teamster election and follows a troubling trend of the Hoffa administration. It seems that everything is spin, PR, and very little

action. It reminds me of the Jackie Presser days.

Finally, Mr. Mathis, I know you read the newspapers and keep up on world events as part of your job. Therefore I would hope that someone (maybe you) would tell the editor of the *Teamster* magazine that Ron Carey was found innocent of all charges in October 2001. I am sure that a truthseeker such as yourself will take care of that. I would even consider rejoining DRIVE if the *Teamster* magazine would publish the outcome of the Carey trial and apologize to Ron for their misguided attacks.

Wesley Epperson
Local 41, UPS
Kansas City

P.S. Call the Independent Review Board at 800-225-5472 and tell them to lift the ban on Ron Carey.

Not Such a Great Movie Deal

On the inside back page of the latest *Teamster* magazine, there is an ad for the Teamster Movie Program, a website selling movies at "steep discounts" to members, with \$1 of every sale going to the James R. Hoffa Scholarship Program.

Most of their DVDs sell for \$24.98, while the same can be bought on Amazon.com for \$16.99. My question is, what are the Teamsters doing with the rest of the money, assuming anyone is foolish enough to pay those outrageous prices? And if these are such great prices for the members, why isn't the general public barred from using the site?

Sean Barkwill
Local 728
Atlanta

Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers—every kind of Teamster, and spouses, too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 15-member International Steering Committee was elected in September 2001 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had over 400 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BY-LAWS. All business agents and stewards should be elected. Vacancies in office should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs elected by regions. An end to trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent until proven guilty, right to remain on the job until final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers, and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for anything less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right, backed up by our union, to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND FIVE-DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four-day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25-and-out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in his jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for membership, and subject to membership approval.

IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the differences in age, race and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

Reform Movement Mourns Loss of Ken Mee

by Ken Paff
TDU Organizer

On Feb. 18 Teamster reform leader Ken Mee succumbed to cancer at his home in Fremont, California. He was 64 years old.

Ken retired two years ago, after 28 years as a Teamster carhauler, including seven years as an elected International Vice President from the West.

In 1979 Ken joined TDU, and for the past 23 years he brought his energy and commitment to the movement to reform and revitalize the Teamsters Union. Ken was elected International Vice President from the West as part of the Ron Carey Slate. But above all, Ken was a rank and file Teamster.

He was at his best talking to Teamsters about organizing, about reform, about making our union stronger. As a rank and file carhauler he was known all over California as a Teamster who would stand in solidarity with any labor battle, and also as someone who would talk your ear off trying to get you involved.

After his election as an International officer, Ken never forgot where he came from or considered himself a big shot. He took on projects like piloting a truck caravan, the Earthquake Express, throughout the West in the battle against NAFTA and free trade deals that undermine workers' rights both north and south of the border. And he remained committed to building our TDU reform movement.

Ken often commented to me that he became an International officer by accident, as a messenger for our Teamster movement. And he would jokingly blame us for pushing him into that position. He seemed to be able to bring humor to any situation, even a serious struggle, to help raise our spirits.

Ken was an excellent messenger to bring out the best in our Teamsters Union and in each of us. We will miss him and will carry his message on with the same principles that Ken did.

Even cancer did not stop Ken from helping Teamsters fight back. In the fall of 2000, between rounds of chemotherapy, Ken found the strength to travel to Michigan to testify as an expert witness on behalf of Flint carhauler Robert Williams, at the request of attorney Barbara Harvey. Ken explained to the jury how the contractual seniority rights had been violated by Ryder and Local 332 leaders when Ryder employees transferred to TSI to follow their work. Ken's testimony was so



Ken Mee, second from right, with the Earthquake Express.

persuasive and credible that the IBT brought in carhaul director Doc Conder and Fred Zuckerman and IBT attorney James Wallington, and Ryder brought in Al McCune and Ron Borges, all to help the company counter Ken's testimony. They failed. The jury believed Ken, and Williams won his case.

Ken is survived by his wife Mary Ann, his two daughters and four grandchildren.

TDU International Steering Committee

Co-Chairs:

Dan Campbell, Chicago, Local 705
Joe Fahey, Watonsville, Calif., Local 912
Maria Martinez, Pasco, Wash., Local 556
Michael Savvoir, Kansas City, Mo., Local 41

Organizer:

Ken Paff, Detroit

Trustees:

Erik Jensen, Minneapolis Local 320
Matt Latzo, Baltimore Local 311
Michael Ruscigno, New York Local 802

Members:

Willie Hardy, Memphis Local 667
Homer Lambert, Chicago Local 743
Tom Sheibley, Brockton, Mass., Local 653
Willie Smith, Columbus Local 413
Frank Villa, Los Angeles Local 630
Shelly Worley, Minneapolis Local 2000
Maria Zayas, Puerto Rico Local 901

Alternates:

Brian Chapman, Toronto Local 938
Michael Schaffer, Youngstown, Ohio, Local 377
Mike Brannan, Seattle Local 763

How to Contact TDU

We want to hear from you. Contact us at the addresses below for more information about TDU, or to send us articles or letters.

National Office: P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich., 48210. Phone: (313) 842-2600. Fax: (313) 842-0227.

TDU can be contacted by e-mail at: tdudetroit@tdu.org or on the World Wide Web at: www.tdu.org

NY Office: P.O. Box 170131, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217 Phone: (718) 624-7746. Fax: (718) 875-9336. E-mail: tdu.east@verizon.net

Local 556 Health and Safety Campaign Continues

Teamster Meatpackers, Best-Selling Author Expose Safety Violations

Local 556 Teamsters fighting for safer working conditions at the Pasco, Wash., plant of meatpacking giant IBP/Tyson got a boost from an unusual ally — a nationally known best-selling author.

Eric Schlosser, author of *Fast Food Nation*, spoke along with workers from IBP and other food processing employers like Lamb Weston, at a recent community forum about the link between worker and food safety.

Schlosser was in town to support a Health and Safety Campaign launched by IBP workers last June. Lamb Weston workers are trying to win health-and-safety language in their contract for the first time in negotiations that start Feb. 21.

Fast Food Nation chronicles how the speed-up associated with the mass production of beef, chicken, french fries and other fast food products puts both workers and consumers at increased risk.

IBP members know the risks firsthand. More than 1,250 injuries were recorded at the Pasco plant in 1999 and 2000, the last two years for which the data is available.

This incredible rate of injuries, and the failure of local officials to organize any response, led Local 556 workers to build a TDU chapter and organize for change — including the election of TDU members to local office.

Under the reform leadership, mem-

bers have launched a health and safety campaign, including marches, trainings, a worker survey, and community events to pressure IBP to eliminate hazards that put workers and consumers at risk.

More than 250 Teamsters and supporters turned out for the forum where Local 556 President Melquiadez Pereyra revealed preliminary results of the survey IBP workers conducted last year.

Five hundred workers completed the survey, which was developed and analyzed with the help of academic experts from the University of Massachusetts.

Preliminary results were shocking:

- More than three-quarters of those surveyed said they had some sort of work-related health problem in the previous 12 months.

- Nearly all of those who responded believed production speed contributed to accidents and injuries in their work area.

- About three-quarters said understaffing contributed to injuries.

- More than two-thirds said they witnessed unsanitary conditions and nearly a third said they witnessed inhumane procedures, such as dismembering animals while they were still conscious.

Problems like these are rife in the meatpacking industry, which is second in the nation in cumulative trauma disorders like carpal tunnel syndrome.

"The unusual thing in Pasco is not that people are getting hurt, but that the union cares," Schlosser told the crowd.

Schlosser, whose investigative reporting has also been featured in *Rolling Stone* and *Mother Jones* magazines, applauded Local 556 members and called on them to lead the way to change an industry infamous for its low pay and exploitation of immigrant labor.

Local 556 hopes to make the Pasco



Eric Schlosser, the author of *Fast Food Nation*, spoke to IBP workers and supporters.

Colorado Meatpackers Launch Reform Movement

With a workplace that resembles a war zone, and union officials who are missing in action, workers at the Excel meatpacking plant in Fort Morgan, Colo., are fed up with being Corporate America's collateral damage.

Local 961 members are holding workshops and joining TDU to take on abusive supervisors and health and safety violations.

More than 750 workers have signed a petition demanding that the local increase the number of union stewards in all departments and shifts, hold secret ballot

elections for all steward positions, and conduct regular membership meetings in Fort Morgan.

The 2,000 workers at Excel have long been the sleeping giant of Local 961. They make up 80 percent of the local's membership, but are represented by fewer than half a dozen union stewards.

Local 961 officials hold union meetings in Denver, an hour and a half away from Fort Morgan where 80 percent of the membership lives. Meetings are held only in English, although the overwhelming majority of the local's members speak only Spanish.

In January, a delegation of Excel workers drove to Denver and presented a pro-

posal to amend the local's bylaws to give members the right to elect their stewards.

"The union officials tried to talk us out of submitting the amendment. They told us the change wasn't necessary," said Pedro Battez. "But we stuck to our guns. Now the members get to decide the issue by a democratic vote."

Members have submitted the 750-plus petition signatures to Local 961 President Doug Whetstine, asking him to use his powers under the local bylaws to hold official membership meetings in both Denver and Fort Morgan.

That way all Local 961 members can have a voice and vote on union issues — including the vote on elected stewards which will be conducted at the March membership meeting.

The Excel workers are being supported in their efforts by Roadway drivers and other Local 961 members who also want elected stewards and more aggressive union representation.

"Sticking together to enforce our rights is what unions are supposed to be all about," said TDU member and Roadway driver Dick Gebhardt. "The way I see it, by standing up for the workers at Excel, I'm standing up for myself and all Local 961 members."

Sysco Drivers Win Attendance Victory

Drivers at Sysco in Baltimore are celebrating a breakthrough in their battle against an illegal attendance policy. In January, OSHA ordered that Sysco eliminate or revise its policy. The agency also ordered that the records of a number of drivers be cleared, including the revocation of suspensions.

The victory stems from a case filed by the drivers under Section 405 of the Federal Code — the truck safety whistleblower protection act. Under the Sysco policy drivers were penalized for taking sick days when they were too ill to drive.

Department of Transportation regulations state that a driver has the right to determine when he/she is unfit to drive safely.

This is the latest of a number of successful cases brought against Sysco over Whistleblower protection. In Baltimore, more cases are pending so it is likely that yet more drivers will benefit in the future. To get rid of this and other repressive policies once and for all, members are now setting their sights on the contract, which expires in just under one year. A meeting has been scheduled to discuss initial plans.

Local 127 Officers Vote Themselves Unauthorized Pay Hikes What Happened to Members' Rights?

Christopher M. Dighton
Local 127, Mass. Turnpike Authority
Boston

In May of 2001, Local 127 Principal Officer Robert Cullinane and President Mike Cullen voted themselves pay raises without duly notifying the membership, in direct violation of our local's bylaws. I filed charges against them with Joint Council 10 in June of 2001. After the Joint Council ruled that Local 127 had to hear the charges first, my local officers finally scheduled a hearing for Feb. 25, 2002.

In order to investigate my case, I made several requests to view the minutes of both Executive Board and general membership meetings, as well as to view the financial records of the local. In January, I received my response from Cullinane. He informed me that because I had viewed the minutes in July of 2001 (on an

unrelated matter) and had been present at each meeting since, there was no need for me to view the records again. He also informed me that in order for me to view the financial records, I would first have to state exactly what records I wanted to see.

Our local bylaws do not set any stipulations for requesting information other than that the request has to be made in writing. So how does an officer get away with this? What happened to members' rights? Do the bylaws adopted by the membership mean anything? How does a member hold an officer to the oath that he took freely and willingly? Is there something to hide?

I have requested President Hoffa's assistance and direction on this matter and am currently awaiting his response. Will President Hoffa back up all he has said about running a clean union? Will he keep his campaign promises?

Background on the Dues Issue

How Did 'No Due Increase' Become 'Big Dues Increase'?

James Hoffa ran on the "No Dues Increase" platform for the past few years, but immediately after the election he switched to "Big Dues Increase."

Hoffa planned to raise dues all along, but consistently denied it when he ran for office. Why? Apparently he lied to the members before the election, and now believes that Teamsters will forget about his doubtful integrity before the next election.

The very first meeting of the newly elected IBT General Executive Board voted to call a special convention to raise dues.

The Record

Hoffa ran on the "The No Dues Increase Slate" in 1996. He promised to "quadruple strike benefits without a dues increase." He made the same promise in the 1998 election.

When he ran against challenger Tom Leedham in 2001, Hoffa's spin artists claimed that Leedham would raise dues if elected, but that Hoffa would not. Leedham's platform called for cutting out multiple salaries and perks to divert the money to a strike fund, and that if a dues increase

became necessary, it would only be after a membership vote to approve it.

But in 2001 Hoffa signaled, to those paying close attention, that a big dues hike was coming. At the June 2001 IBT Convention in Las Vegas, the Hoffa administration put forward a Resolution setting up a Blue Ribbon Commission on Finances. At that convention, Leedham took the floor to state, "Your current secret plan is to, after the election, if you're lucky enough to win, hold a special convention, and raise dues. Be honest about it."

Everyone in the hall — including delegates from every local — knew what would happen. But Hoffa and his supporters refused to be honest with the members. They deliberately withheld the truth from us until after the election. Hoffa controlled about 90 percent of the delegates, and the "Blue Ribbon Commission," designed to recommend a big dues hike, was passed.

The History

There is a long history to this issue. In 1994 then-Teamster President Ron

Carey proposed two alternatives to deal with financing and a strike fund.

First, he proposed a plan very similar to the current plan: increase dues to 2.5 hours pay, and some new money would go to the International Union (including setting up a dedicated strike fund) and some to the local unions.

But there were very important differences:

Every delegate to the special convention, regardless of their political outlook, should think about what is best for our union's future. If the answer is to let the members vote, give them honest information, and get members involved in this process, then delegates should vote accordingly.

First, members were given a right to vote, by secret ballot, on the proposal. It was overwhelmingly rejected in that vote, with all of the Hoffa forces, the vast majority of the officers, campaigning against it.

Second, the Carey administration was cutting out the fat. Carey had cut his own salary by \$75,000 per year, reduced other salaries, and eliminated most of the multiple salaries and wasteful perks. Instead, money was going into organizing (our union was starting to grow, for the first time in many years), corporate campaigns to win good contracts, and membership services.

After that proposal was rejected, Carey offered a second option to Hoffa and the officials allied with him. He suggested a \$2 dues increase, every cent of which would go into a dedicated strike fund. But Hoffa, his slate and their allies said no. They would not support any dues increase, even a small one devoted totally to the strike fund.

The plan died, even though a \$2 dues increase dedicated to a strike fund would raise \$34 million a year, enough for \$200 per week benefits.

From that point on, Hoffa built his platform around "No Dues Increase." He claimed he would miraculously quadruple strike benefits without any new money. Of course, this was impossible.

Hoffa in Office

In late 1998 Hoffa won the election over Leedham and in early 1999 became Teamster president.

But instead of quadrupling strike benefits something else happened. Money to organizing was cut, money to support strikes was cut, and money to multiple salaries and meetings at resorts went way up.

The organizing budget was cut by 63 percent, and our union started to shrink once again. Payment of strike benefits was down 33 percent. Officer and staff pensions went up 18 percent, PR up 49 percent and multiple salaries for officers went up a whopping 478 percent. These figures come from the International's own financial data as reported to the Department of Labor on LM-2 financial reports.

Building Trust with Members

So now the leadership is trying to slap a big dues increase on the Teamster members, without a vote. It's a wrong-headed move.

Our union, above all else, needs the trust of our members. We all know many members will never like any dues increase, but most will support one if presented with honest facts and a plan to make good use of their money. Plenty of local unions have raised dues on that basis at one time or another. Plenty of locals have set up organizing or local strike funds in that way.

Instead of designing a dues increase around strike benefits, and letting members have the final say, the top leadership is willing to break trust with our members, to grab millions in new dues money.

That method hurts our union. Our union strength depends on our members' commitment. We need our members' trust to win battles, organize new members, and make our union strong.

Every organizer knows the first thing an anti-union employer will say is, "They will raise your dues without a vote." We should not play into their hands. We should say, "No, we will give our members a voice and a vote."

Every delegate to the special convention, regardless of their political outlook, should think about what is best for our union's future. If the answer is to let the members vote, give them honest information, and get members involved in this process, then delegates should vote accordingly.

Every Teamster should demand a roll-call vote of the delegates, so we can all see how they voted, and a membership vote on the dues proposal.

This November vote the



JIM HOFFA

No Dues Increase Slate

✓ I will not support a dues increase, unless approved by a direct vote of the members.

✓ I will double strike benefits without a dues hike.

Fraternally,

For more information contact **HOFFA '96**
P.O. Box 32363, Detroit, MI 48232-0363 — (313) 568-4633

Hoffa's 1996 campaign literature stressed that Hoffa would oppose any dues increase. He also promised to "cut bloated salaries."

(UPS Campaign News, Fall 1996)

In a separate flyer, Hoffa claimed that if Ron Carey were reelected he would call a special convention to raise dues, as Hoffa is doing now.

In Hoffa's 1998 campaign literature he promised to "Fully disclose union business and union finances to each and every member."

(Teamster magazine, July/August 1998, page 50.)

The \$2 Solution

The Hoffa administration is proposing to raise dues by an average of \$8 per month, and claiming that the main reason is to provide for a strike fund. And we do need a strike fund.

But a dues increase of just \$2 per month, if totally dedicated to a strike fund, would provide millions more dollars for strike benefits than the Hoffa plan! In fact, the Hoffa proposal will only put about \$1.32 per month of your dues into a strike fund.

Here is how we know only \$1.32 of your dues will go to strike benefits: The

International's own figures say they will get an average of \$8.80 per member, and they will use just 15 percent to support striking Teamsters. That's \$1.32 for strikers, and a lot more for officials.

Which makes more sense? Two dollars per month dedicated only to a strike fund, which would provide \$200 per week for striking Teamsters, or a big dues increase with most of it not going to strikes, but under the control of top officials who believe that regular trips to Hawaii, Las Vegas and Florida resorts are a great use of union funds?

How You Can Make a Difference

Win a Vote on Any Dues Increase

- ▶ Circulate copies of this *Convoy Dispatch* to fellow Teamsters to get members informed. Contact TDU to get extra copies.
- ▶ Circulate the national petition calling for a Right to Vote on the proposed dues increase.
- ▶ Call TDU to get a Dues Increase Information Packet, including materials you can use to inform other Teamsters.
- ▶ Contact TDU to set up an informational meeting in your area.
- ▶ Make a motion at your March union meeting that requests your Local Union's delegates to vote against the increase, and vote for your Right to Vote on any dues increase. (This motion is in order and authorized in Article 3, Section 5(a) of the IBT constitution; local unions can adopt advisory motions to advise their delegates.)
- ▶ Ask the delegates from your local union to sign the petition; report your results immediately to TDU so that all members may know how the delegates stand. Publicize their names so members can ask them what their stand is.
- ▶ Join TDU, the movement fighting for our right to vote and for a Teamster budget that puts money to use for the members, not for perks for officials.

James Hoffa and Your Teamster Dues

1994	Year that Hoffa opposed a dues increase to build the strike fund
1996	Year that Hoffa pledged to immediately raise strike benefits without a dues increase
140	Number of multiple salaries for Hoffa's political appointees (up from 18 before Hoffa took office)
199	Teamster officials "earning" more than \$100,000 per year (up from 142 three years ago)
61%	How much more those officials got in 2000 than in 1998
63%	How much funding for organizing has been reduced since 1998
\$2	The monthly dues increase needed to fund \$200 per week strike benefits
\$8	The average monthly dues increase being proposed by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Finances
\$134 Million	How much new money the union (International & locals) will get each year from this increase
\$22 Million	How much of this will go to a strike fund per year



The Bottom Line on the Proposed Dues Increase

The 2001 IBT Convention authorized the International to set up a Blue-Ribbon Commission to investigate union finances and make recommendations. While the commission's final report won't be available until early March, they have issued a preliminary recommendation.

- Monthly dues will go up by one-half hour's pay. For example, someone earning \$16 per hour will pay \$8 more per month. For most Teamsters, this would mean a new rate of 2.5 hours.
- Under the preliminary proposal, the International would get 22 percent of 2.5 hours' pay per-member per-month — an average of \$8.80 per member, compared to \$4.90 now.
- Average Teamster dues will go from \$32 to \$40 per month, bringing in about \$134 million in new money. About half of this will go to the Inter-

national and half to the locals.

- Under the preliminary proposal, only 15 percent (\$22 million) of International income will be used to establish a strike fund, and only 10 percent (\$15 million) for new organizing efforts. What's the other \$97 million for?
- The report suggests that strike benefits be ten times a member's hourly rate per week, with a \$75 minimum and \$250 maximum. So, someone normally earning \$16 per hour would receive \$160 a week. (Benefits may instead be four times dues, which for almost all members will be the same amount.)
- If, instead, the IBT made a \$2 per-member per-month assessment dedicated to the strike fund, that would bring in \$33.6 million and could provide a benefit of \$200 per week to **all** Teamsters.

How to Get More Information On the Proposed Dues Increase

- ▶ Check the new website www.voteondues.org for information, leaflets and petitions to download, comments and regular updates. The Preliminary Proposal of the Blue Ribbon Commission is on this site; so is a complete list of delegates to the convention, including from your local.
- ▶ Contact TDU to get the latest updated information and materials on the proposal and what members are doing about it, and to discuss plans and ideas related to your local.

The Way Forward at UPS

The United Parcel Service contract is the most important agreement to be negotiated by the Teamsters this year. It will set a pattern for freight, carhaul and many regional and local Teamster contracts, not to mention the rest of the labor movement.

Unlike 1997, however, this year our union is being led in negotiations by an International President with no experience negotiating against UPS.

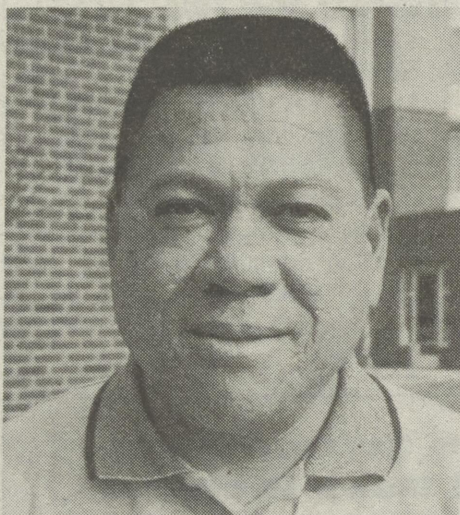
What should UPS Teamsters expect from this year's contract negotiations? And what can rank and file Teamsters do to ensure that they win a strong contract?

We will get what we fight for

UPS has deep pockets. Despite the recession and the events of Sept. 11, in 2001 the company recorded its second-largest annual profits in history. UPS has enough money available to negotiate a contract that includes significant improvements.

As Teamster International President, James Hoffa has a strong incentive to win a decent contract. UPS workers make up the single largest group of members in our union. Hoffa's success, or lack of success, in these negotiations will have a significant impact on his reputation as a negotiator, and on his chances for reelection.

The scenario facing UPS Teamsters, then, is not one of give backs and concessions. Rather, the challenge we face is whether we can push our union leadership to use contract negotiations to fix chronic problems. We need our union leadership to pursue a "high road" bargaining strategy



"As full-timers we make a good living. We need to make sure that our wages keep up with the cost of living, but more importantly we need to find solutions to problems like excessive overtime, over supervision, and production harassment."

Armando Echeverria
Local 396
Los Angeles

that will not only win healthy wage and pension increases, but also strengthen our union at UPS for the future.

Whether or not this happens is largely up to rank and file Teamsters. If we organize, we can force our union and UPS to address the big problems. If not, we may win higher wages in the short term while losing ground in the future.

The legacy of low road bargaining at UPS

For many years, our union's leaders pursued a "low road" bargaining strategy at UPS. Low road bargaining means winning gains for a few workers at the expense of the majority and not involving rank and file members in the bargaining process. This strategy divided us against each other and led many members to believe that the union was a third party, rather than an organization that belongs to them.

The most important example of low road bargaining at UPS occurred when our union officials allowed UPS to create low-paid part-time jobs in 1982. Until that time, part-timers were paid the same as full-time workers. The low part-time rate gave UPS an incentive to create more part-time jobs. Today, of the more than 230,000 Teamsters at UPS, approximately 133,000 are part-timers.

The high road alternative

It doesn't have to be this way. In 1997, our union demonstrated that we could take the high road in contract negotiations and win. The 1997 campaign put the spotlight on part-time jobs, an issue that all members understood and could fight for. The contract campaign also included rank and file Teamsters on the bargaining committee and aggressive internal organizing on the job.

As a result, we won 10,000 new full-time jobs, created from combining 20,000 part-time jobs, and began to decrease the gap between part-time and full-time wages. Top executives at UPS finally understood that the union had the strength to do more than just demand a few scraps from the UPS table.

Current union leadership has a poor track record

Unfortunately, James Hoffa has no experience pursuing this kind of a "high road" contract campaign.

In the few contracts he has negotiated, he has lowered members' expectations, excluded the rank and file, and sold weak agreements as the best possible settlement. During carhaul bargaining, Hoffa used a first-year bonus to sell an agreement that didn't include adequate job security protections. At Anheuser-Busch, Hoffa told Teamsters that if they didn't approve a substandard contract, he would force them out on strike.

Nevertheless, it would be a big mistake to think that the Teamster leadership is simply going to sell out or that the

UPS contract is already cut and dried. Hoffa knows that he will be held to a high standard by UPS Teamsters. In fact, he has already stated that he plans to negotiate a superior contract to the 1997 agreement and has put forward some positive opening bargaining proposals.

It's up to members to get involved, put pressure on UPS and hold our leaders responsible. UPS Teamsters can learn a lesson from Northwest Airlines Teamsters, who established a rank and file network, rejected a weak Hoffa contract, and won an agreement with better wages, pensions and job protections.

Members have power

Rank and file Teamsters have several key tools that give them the power to win a strong contract.

The first is the power to vote a contract down. Even the threat of voting a contract down puts pressure on our union officials to not settle for less.

Members also have the power to organize at work. Our co-workers will only push for a better contract if they are educated about the issues and expect a good contract. We have to reach out to our co-workers, pass out contract bulletins and spread information. Later, we will hold rallies, T-shirt days and do public outreach.

Finally, members have the power to demand accurate information from union officials about what is happening at the bargaining table. We deserve to know how negotiations are going every step of the way. Questions from members about the negotiations put officials on notice that we are watching what's going on.

Setting benchmarks for our contract

An important way to use our power strategically is to set specific benchmark contract goals. Rank and file members can use these goals as a starting point for educating and organizing around the contract. These benchmark goals can eventually be used as a scorecard to evaluate a tentative agreement.

What are these benchmark goals? While they will continue to take shape as bargaining proceeds, the outlines of our demands are clear right now. They include:

Full-time Jobs: We need to set a goal of creating a full-time job for every part-timer who wants one. We need to fight for every one of the 3,000 new full-time jobs per year that the IBT offered in their opening proposal. We also need to close the wage gap between part-time and full-time workers by increasing the maximum wage rate for part-timers and creating a progression that quickly gets all part-timers to this level.

Quality of Life Issues: We need to counter demands from UPS for "flexibility" with our own needs for "livability" around issues like mandatory overtime and harassment by supervisors.



"Part-timers need a living wage at UPS. For us the top priorities in the contract are full-time job opportunities, closing the wage gap with full-timers by ending the four-year progression and boosting the starting rate significantly, as well as giving part-timers four guaranteed hours of work."

Dawn Stanger
Local 597, Vermont

For example, the IBT is proposing to fine UPS for forcing Teamsters to work more than two nine-and-a-half hour days in a payroll period. This is a step in the right direction, but it will take rank and file pressure to win this change.

Wage and Pension Issues: We need to fight to ratchet up wages and pensions to the highest standard. Bonuses for part-timers in lieu of wage increases have no place in our contract. We need to ensure that every UPS retiree has a decent pension and affordable health care. This is an issue of vital concern for tens of thousands of UPS Teamsters in the Western Region, Central Pennsylvania and elsewhere.

Rank and file Teamsters must lead the fight

In order to win gains around these and other issues, rank and file Teamsters at UPS need to get organized. That's why rank and file Teamster leaders from around the union are working together with TDU to form the UPS Rank & File Network.

The UPS Rank & File Network will serve as a communication structure and as an organizing framework to put pressure on UPS management and union officials to negotiate the contract that we deserve.

The UPS Rank & File Network will produce and distribute literature about the contract campaign, hold planning meetings, and organize petition drives and rallies to create pressure for a strong contract. When a tentative agreement is reached, the Rank & File Network will evaluate it and make a recommendation on whether or not it deserves the support of UPS Teamsters.

Working together, rank and file UPS Teamsters have a long history of fighting for and winning important changes. Though the situation is much different this year from 1997, we can build on our history to win a strong contract. If you're interested in joining the UPS Rank & File Network, contact TDU. The time to get involved is today.

How Deep are UPS's Pockets?

As bargaining between the Teamsters and UPS gets underway this month, many Teamsters are wondering about UPS's financial situation.

It turns out that UPS is one of the healthiest companies around. Here's the real deal about UPS's finances:

2001 a Profitable Year

UPS released its earnings numbers for 2001 in late January. These figures show that despite the recession and the events of Sept. 11, UPS topped \$30 billion in revenue for the first time. In addition, UPS had its second most profitable year in history, earning \$2.4 billion in net profits after taxes.

That means that in 2001, UPS made over \$10,000 in profit for every Teamster member! Between 1998 and 2001, UPS earned just under \$8 billion in net profits. That's over \$34,000 per Teamster member for the period covering most of our last contract.

The year 2001 was made even more profitable for UPS because of help received from taxpayers. UPS received \$37 million from the government as its part of the Airline Stabilization Act, the industry bailout passed by Congress after Sept. 11. In addition, UPS's accountants managed to get away with lowering the company's tax bill in 2001, resulting in a \$24 million savings in tax payments.

A Changed Environment for UPS

Profit and revenue figures are important. But they don't tell the whole story about all that has changed at UPS since the 1997 negotiations.

For example, in 1999 UPS became a publicly traded company. There is now lots of analysis available about UPS finances in the business press. The consensus among experts is that UPS is healthy and poised to grow.

At the same time, as a publicly traded company, UPS's finances are vulnerable

to negative media coverage. This gives our union more leverage than in past negotiations.

In the last five years, the package delivery business has also become more competitive. Federal Express has moved into ground shipment and the U.S. Postal Service has moved into next day air delivery. But, despite fear mongering by UPS about the loss of business to FedEx, UPS had a better year than its competitors in 2001 in all delivery categories.

An Opportunity to Win a Strong Contract

In 1997, our 15-day strike cost UPS \$750 million in lost revenue and forced the company to create 10,000 new full-time jobs. A recent survey shows that our union has the ability to put similar pressure on UPS without even calling a strike.

The survey, by financial analysts

Morgan Stanley, found that 83 percent of large shippers plan to divert some business away from UPS to companies like FedEx in the coming months if an agreement isn't reached with our union. UPS has responded to the survey by making several public pronouncements calling for an early settlement of the contract and pointing out that bargaining is starting earlier this year than in 1997. The IBT has countered that they have no intention of settling early.

We need to keep the heat on our union officials at the negotiating table to use our bargaining leverage to full advantage by not settling early. As rank and file Teamsters, it is important that we build a visible contract campaign to keep the pressure on UPS management.

Thanks to UPS's healthy financial status and the company's fear of losing business to the competition, we have an opportunity to win a strong contract. It's time we start organizing to win it.

IBT Submits Non-Economic Bargaining Proposals to UPS

On Jan. 30, the IBT and UPS exchanged bargaining proposals on issues other than wages, benefits and pensions.

On Feb. 12, bargaining began in Dallas and continued for several days. As we go to press, the IBT has not given a bargaining update to members, other than to say that it was a "successful week."

Although UPS has told the media that

they want to finish the contract early, the company presented very few opening proposals. The IBT, on the other hand, presented a significant package. Many of these are decent proposals. Others are quite weak for an opening position, such as the proposal to create 3,000 new full-time jobs in each year of the contract.

Rank and file UPS Teamsters now face the challenge of building a movement to force the IBT national negotiating team to hold the line on the most important issues and pressure UPS to meet our demands.

A summary of some of the more important IBT proposals follows. For a complete copy of the IBT and UPS bargaining proposals, contact TDU. A small donation is requested from nonmembers to cover the costs of copying and postage.

IBT Non-Economic Bargaining Proposals:

Full-time Jobs: Create 3,000 new full-time jobs during each contract year by combining part-time jobs. Preferred part-time jobs are not to be combined.

Innocent till Proven Guilty: Extend "innocent till proven guilty" to cover cardinal infractions in all supplements, riders and addendums. Employee will not be removed from the job until a charge is sustained through the grievance procedure.

Right to Strike: Eliminate binding arbitration as a means of resolving dead-

locked national panel decisions, instead allowing the right to strike. Extend the right to strike during deadlock to local, area and supplemental panels as well.

Excessive Overtime: If an employee is forced to work two nine-and-a-half hour days during a one-week payroll period, they will be paid double time for all hours in excess of eight hours a day for the

entire period. An exception is allowed for peak season.

Article 40 — Air Operations: For every three violations in a 60-day period of exception language allowing air drivers to handle ground volume, the company shall create a full-time package car driver position. Create a three-and-a-half hour daily guarantee for part-time air drivers.

Subcontracting: New language would specifically ban future subcontracting or assignment of Teamster work to new UPS corporate entities. Would also force UPS to end subcontracting of Air work covered by Article 40 and return the work to the bargaining unit by July 31, 2003.

Organizing: Allow union recognition in nonunion UPS subsidiaries and joint ventures based on the collection of a majority of union authorization cards rather than on a lengthy NLRB election. UPS would have to remain neutral in the organizing drive and would have to provide lists of employees to the union in all nonunion units.

Over-70 Package Handling: Require multiple labels on over-70 packages so they can be identified from all angles. Irregular trains in hubs should be operated by two Teamsters. Allow local unions to negotiate a separate delivery system where over-70 volume is high.

Length of Agreement: A three-year agreement, expiring on July 31, 2005.

'What can BROWN do for you?'

That's the tagline of the \$45 million advertising campaign that UPS recently launched in a three-page spread in the Wall Street Journal and in advertisements during the Winter Olympics.

The pricey campaign aims at raising the profile of UPS's non-package businesses such as logistics, freight forwarding and finance — all areas in which UPS is planning serious growth.

Convoy Dispatch contacted several rank and file Teamsters to ask their opinion of the new slogan and the money UPS is spending to promote it. One part-timer commented, "What can Big Brown do for me with \$45 million? Let's see, create more full-time jobs, give us a pay hike ... the possibilities are endless."

It's Contract Time!

Get Your Handbook for UPS Teamsters!

Rank & File Power at UPS

Fighting for a Strong Union and Respect on the Job

With the UPS contract up for negotiations, we need to draw on the lessons of the 1997 contract campaign and the decades' long fight by UPS Teamsters for power on the job.

Rank & File Power at UPS explores the history of UPS labor relations and how the 1997 strike victory was built on a foundation of rank-and-file organization.

It also tells UPS workers what they can do to protect their jobs and win better working conditions.

Rank-and-File Power at UPS is a must-read for stewards and all UPSers interested in building rank-and-file organization to win a strong contract in 2002. **Copies are \$5 each; \$4 for 25 or more.**



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Los Angeles Local 396

LA Officials Try to Force Members into Corrupt Panels

While UPS rank and file members and even local union officials throughout the country complain bitterly about the grievance procedure and how UPS is exploiting the panel system, Danny Bruno, Secretary-Treasurer of Los Angeles Local 396, is trying to convince his members to opt in to this discredited system. Local 396 is currently one of only three locals nationwide to have its own grievance system.

Currently in Local 396 if the local and UPS are not able to resolve a grievance at the local level they can go directly to arbitration. In almost all other locals (the other exceptions being Locals 804 in New York and Local 705 in Chicago) grievances that cannot be resolved locally must go through a series of regional, state, area and national panels. These panel hearings are often held at posh resorts amid rounds of golf played by management and union representatives alike.

Panel System Flawed

Panel meetings have historically been marred by horsetrading of grievances, backroom deals, panel members retaliating against local leaders they don't like by

ruling against their members and interminable delays. The hearings are often held in distant locations making it difficult or impossible for the grievant to attend. No written justifications are issued, unlike arbitration, so members never know why they lost, only that they lost.

UPS Drags Its Feet

A favorite UPS tactic of late is to stonewall, ask for delays and draw out grievance resolution for months and even years. This leads to frustration on the part of rank and file members and an unwillingness to even bother trying to file grievances. In Northern California stewards complain that they have time to deal with only a small percentage of scheduled grievances at their monthly panel hearings because UPS deliberately stonewalls in order to frustrate the procedure.

No Accountability

Finally, there is no accountability in the grievance panels. Union panelists are always from a different local. Too often BAs give indifferent or incompetent pre-

sentations, then blame some anonymous official from another local for a bad decision. Decisions are made in executive session, so the grievant never knows who voted against him/her or why.

In contrast, Local 396 currently has a procedure that is local and so can be attended by the grievant. This allows the grievant to judge the adeptness and vigor

with which his BA presents and argues his grievance. Members can then reward or punish their local union BA with their votes in the next election.

Danny Bruno wants to trade an open and accountable procedure for a distant and mysterious one. Why? Is he that fond of playing golf with the employers at union expense?

Northern California Teamsters:

'No COLA, No Contract'

On Feb. 3, rank and file UPS Teamsters launched a campaign to win a cost of living adjustment (COLA) in the Northern California Supplement.

Northern California housing prices are the highest in the nation. As a result, many UPS Teamsters can't afford to live near where they work and have to drive extremely long distances each day.

The idea of a COLA is that it would provide Teamsters in Northern California with an automatic wage increase tied to the area cost of inflation. This increase would be in addition to regular annual raises negotiated in the contract.

The Northern California activists won their first victory when Western Region International Vice President Chuck Mack was persuaded to call a meeting for area UPS members to discuss the supplement. At the meeting, rank and file Teamsters spoke from the floor about the need for a cost of living adjustment. Activists also began circulating a petition that calls for a COLA clause in the contract.

Along with the petition, supporters are circulating a leaflet that calls on area Teamsters to vote down any supplement that doesn't contain a COLA. The leaflet notes that the national contract can't be settled without the regional agreement. So, if Northern California Teamsters hold

firm in their demand for a COLA there will be huge pressure on UPS to agree.

Local 315 member Roger Wilkins said of the effort, "Important local issues like the COLA are the reason we have a regional supplement. We make big profits for UPS. It's time they pay us enough to live a decent life near where we work."

Right to Vote on Supplements a Great Opportunity

The UPS contract includes 34 area supplements and local riders that are voted on separately from the national agreement. Because only the members covered by a local agreement get to vote on it, these riders and supplements provide a great opportunity for rank and file activists to win victories on important local issues.

For example, in 1997 Teamster members in Louisville rejected a local rider because it didn't contain new full-time jobs. As a result, they won an agreement that guaranteed 100 new full-time jobs in their hub.

New UPS Brochures Available from TDU

Despite the recession, UPS reported \$2.4 billion in profits in 2001. That's over \$10,000 in profits per employee!

The POWER of Part-timers to Win a Strong UPS Contract



Inside:

The POWER of Teamster Members to Win a Strong Contract at UPS



The TDU-sponsored UPS Rank & File Network is publishing contract updates and

informational brochures on how UPS Teamsters can tip the scales toward a stronger contract.

Contact TDU to get materials and to get on the mailing list for regular updates.

UPS and Downs

UPS Airline Mechanics Voting on Contract.

UPS air mechanics, members of Louisville based Teamster Local 2727, are currently voting on a tentative agreement. The proposal includes a 28 percent wage increase over the life of the agreement, a small boost in pension contributions, and maintenance of health insurance. The mechanics also won job security language that prevents aircraft maintenance work from being outsourced.

UPS Implements Bonus Incentive Plan Without a vote.

Managers of the Bellevue and Kirkland package centers in the Seattle area have unilaterally implemented the bonus and incentive plan without negotiating with the union, a clear violation the NLRA. An NLRB charge has been filed.

The company's argument that the bonus is a benefit does not pass legal muster.

Workers opposed to the bonus petitioned UPS to stop the incentive plan. The company told them that they must fill out a waiver form to individually opt out of the plan. This direct dealing, bypassing Local 174, is illegal.

Historically UPS has had to convince the majority of the drivers in a center to vote for the bonus plan to implement it. The company's new attitude that the bonus is "free money," with no strings attached, is outrageous. This theory could also hurt supporters of the bonus plan, allowing UPS to unilaterally remove the plan from centers where it costs UPS too much money.

UPS Members Mark Loss of Equal Pay.

UPS employees at several centers across the country have organized "Black Thursday," wearing black clothing to work to mourn the end of equal pay for part-timers and full-timers. The actions highlight the 1982 agreement between Teamster officials and UPS to allow new part-time employees to be paid \$8 an hour.

The \$8 rate for part-timer stayed in effect until the 1997 agreement, when it rose to \$8.50.

Organizers of this national action ask that all UPS employees wear black clothing on Thursdays until part-timers are given a living wage.

Will Our Union Fight to Save Carhaul Jobs?

The nonunion attack against carhaul Teamsters continues unabated. Teamsters in Selkirk, N.Y., Hazelwood, Mo., and Baltimore are the latest casualties.

Over 200 Baltimore Jobs Lost

At the end of December Baltimore Local 557 lost over 200 carhaul jobs to carrier New Concept Solutions. Leaseaway, now owned by Penske, had operated out of the terminal since 1938. GM refused Leaseaway's request for a rate increase and Penske terminated the contract. Drivers at New Concept Solutions are represented by the machinists union. This arrangement has popped up elsewhere. The presence of what is basically a company union poses

just as big a threat to the unionized carhaul industry as does nonunion competition.

It appears that Hoffa's power and prestige mean little within the AFL-CIO if the IBT is unable to stop another union from raiding one of its core jurisdictions.

More Lost Jobs in N.Y. and Mo.

Nearly as many Teamsters worked out of Selkirk, N.Y., at one time. They also received an unwanted Christmas present when Allied closed its terminal at the end of December.

In Missouri, Teamster jobs were lost to nonunion competition even before Ford's recent announcement that the

Hazelwood plant would be closed.

Allied is also using the current climate to push for concessions. Brokers out of Boston Local 25, for example, are under the gun. Allied has told them that they will have to eat whatever concessions are needed to keep the Volkswagen traffic — or lose their jobs.

Norfolk, Va., one of the few terminals in the East to resist concessions, has now been strapped with the flex workweek.

Mechanics Oppose the Flex

In the Midwest, Allied is maneuvering to get the flex workweek for mechanics. Some locals appear to be helping Allied's efforts by repeating the lie that other locals have already accepted the flex. Fortunately, stewards are actively in

touch with each other and can overcome this trick.

Conditions in driveaway (see article below) are just as difficult.

Aggressive Steps Needed

Some local unions are grumbling about the International's lack of action, wondering when real steps (rather than PR) will be taken to address this growing problem. At a recent Detroit Local 299 meeting, members suggested that carhaul locals put together their own network.

What will come of this, or of the International's position, is not clear.

What is clear is that hundreds more Teamster jobs are down the dumper, with more to come if aggressive steps are not taken.

Freight Lines

Mexican Carriers May Rule Border.

Mexican truckers will dominate cross-border commerce because they are willing to do the same work for less money than their U.S. counterparts. Donald Jauguet, director of employee relations for Schneider, believes that because of lower wages, "the evolution will be toward Mexican drivers handling the majority of freight."

Jauguet made this statement at the annual seminar of the Transportation Research Board (TRB). *Transport Topics* reported Jauguet's remarks and went on to report that Jauguet said wages for U.S. drivers near the Mexican border might go down because of the availability of cheaper labor.

Mike Belzer, chairman of the TRB meeting, said there will be "a lot of demand for premium Mexican drivers, and those drivers will command a premium wage." He added, "U.S. drivers in the same freight lanes will have lower earning potential, which will drive up demand for Mexican drivers." Under provisions of NAFTA, the U.S. must allow Mexican carriers to make international deliveries throughout the country.

Union LTL Carriers Report Profits Down.

Yellow Corp. announced their after-tax profits dropped to \$22.7 million as compared to \$69.4 million in 2000. A press release cited in *Transport Topics* stated Yellow's top managers do not anticipate significant economic improvement until later this year. In a similar statement, Roadway saw its profit drop 45.5 percent to \$30.8 million from its 2000 figure of \$56.5 million. "Looking forward, we expect the dismal economic conditions we experienced in 2001 to continue in the first quarter of 2002," Roadway Chairman and CEO Michael W. Wickham remarked. At ABF, profits fell to \$41.4 million from \$76.2 million in 2000. USF Freightways reported profits of \$43.4 million as compared to \$97.8 million a year ago. Consolidated Freightways had yet to report its figures as we went to press.

CF Faces Law Suits on Restroom Cameras.

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to stop two lawsuits accusing Consolidated Freightways of invading the privacy of its employees by installing hidden cameras and recording devices in restrooms. According to *Transport Topics*, CF installed the surveillance equipment in the ceilings and behind two-way mirrors in the men's restrooms at its terminal in Mira Loma, Calif. The article goes on to report that workers discovered the equipment in 1997. Employees filed the lawsuits, one a class action case and the other on behalf of 282 employees. They seek damages and an end to the practice.

A-P-A Shuts Down.

A-P-A Transport has shut its doors. The 54-year old Teamster northeastern LTL carrier was unable to survive the recession and nonunion competition when their lending institution refused to extend additional financing. The carrier had 32 service centers in 13 states and four provinces in Eastern Canada employing 1,900 people. A-P-A President Armand Pohan wrote, "The company intends to make all of its deliveries, to collect all monies it is owed, to pay all of its obligations, including wages..."

A-P-A plans to transfer much of its freight to New Penn Motor Express, also a Teamster carrier. New Penn has agreed to provide jobs to some A-P-A drivers and dock workers. A-P-A paid the full NMFA wage rate and had never approached its employees for concessions.

What About Drive-Away?

When the Hoffa administration took office, about 1,400 Teamsters worked in driveaway under the national carhaul agreement, delivering new trucks from Freightliner, Mack, Navistar, Volvo, Ford, etc. Now there are about 700, and employers could be aiming for zero, wiping out a whole Teamster jurisdiction.

Will our union fight back? Rank and file Teamsters involved in the industry are crying out for a coordinated program.

In February about 100 Teamsters employed by Active Transport in Mt. Holly, N.C., lost their jobs delivering Freightliners.

In January, a similar number in Virginia, employed by Hook Up, lost their jobs delivering Volvos. The new company, Auto Truck Transport, is an offshoot of the owners of Active, and members are demanding legal action on that basis.

Under the gun now are drivers in Portland, Ore., Chillicothe, Ohio, and other locations.

The problem is not new. For years Active (and Jupiter before it) have been playing one group against another and making attempts at setting up nonunion companies.

But the problem has grown to catastrophic proportions since the employers are using the slowdown in truck production to attack us.

Members want action, including legal action, now. Our union needs to work with other unions and launch a major campaign aimed at the manufacturers as well as the delivery companies. And we need a national organizing program.

The alternative is to let individual groups of Teamsters fight on their own, and risk losing our union clout as well as the jobs and pensions of many Teamsters.

Roadway, Teamster Officials Caught Blacklisting Miami TDU Member Wins Job, Overturns Grievance Panel

Amadeo Bianchi, with 24 years at Roadway and 17 as a steward, was fired from the Miami terminal on Oct. 30, and the Southern Region Grievance Procedure and his BA, Don Matt, quickly flushed his job away. But now Bianchi, backed by TDU and attorney Barbara Harvey, has won a powerful decision from the Election Administrator, who ordered reinstatement and full back pay.

The decision (2002 EAD 554) follows a thorough investigation, including taking sworn depositions of the union panel members who got in bed with management to fire this good unionist. The decision proves they did it because of Bianchi's active support for Tom Leedham in the IBT election. The decision states that Ken Bryant, co-chair of the joint committee, was "most unbelievable" when he claimed he could not understand

that Bianchi was completely innocent. Bryant works for Tyson Johnson, International Vice President and assistant Freight Director of the IBT.

The decision cites seven strong reasons why Bianchi should not have been fired, and the EA found that Bryant and Marr could not have failed to grasp them. Bianchi was fired for advising an injured member to file an injury report with Roadway. It was proper advice. Marr gave the same man the wrong advice; he told him to call Central States Health and Welfare!

It is likely that Roadway will appeal the decision. Sadly, it is also likely that the International Union will also appeal, using our union's power and money against a good Teamster.

Interested Teamsters can find this important decision at www.ibtvote.org or get it from TDU.

Disastrous Plan to Divide Members Must be Stopped

Central Pennsylvania Teamsters Organize to Protect Pensions

Mike Nardelli
Local 229, Roadway Express
Scranton, Pa.

Teamsters in Central Pennsylvania are organizing to protect their pensions and provide needed improvements against the rip-offs that have plagued our Central Pennsylvania Pension Fund. This is a campaign for fairness. We have Teamsters with 25 or 30 years of contributions who cannot retire above poverty level. And now the trustees of our fund have a proposal to take money from the pension plan of younger Teamsters to make up for their own mismanagement, instead of going after the

employers that are legally responsible for the underfunding.

The campaign is urgent at this time because the trustees are moving on their plan, which would not solve the pension problems but instead would divide Teamster members, an employer's dream.

The impending implementation of these divisive changes to the pension has caused a flurry of rank and file action. The trustees of the pension fund have decided to continue with the defined contribution (RIP) plan and also "tax" any participant in the fund younger than

51. This tax will be anywhere from 20 to 35 percent of their yearly contribution, depending on age and years of service. This tax will then be deposited in the old defined benefit plan to hopefully repay the \$160 million underfunding that exists because of a variety of reasons.

The Central Pennsylvania Teamsters Pension Reform Committee is inviting every participant of the pension fund to a meeting Feb. 24 at the Milton High School at 1 p.m. The Reform Committee (RC) is holding this meeting to inform, involve, and answer any questions the members may have. It is our goal to have an active, united membership challenging the trustees to act on our behalf.

Why is this necessary? The trustees seem determined to force the members to pay for the benefits they have already earned a second time — instead of even attempting to collect from the employers who are actually responsible to make up the underfunding. *Why?* The trustees have also decided to take a portion (as much as 35 percent) of the future earnings of younger participants without giving them anything in return. Isn't this stealing? The trustees claim this is legal but the question is the same: isn't this stealing?

The RC has been very active in the last few months. We have a web-page where you can view newsletters, memos to political leaders, and a bulletin board for comments, questions, and conversation. You can access this site at www.saveourpension.org. There is an electronic petition on the site for anyone

who wants to become involved.

The website became necessary to keep track of all the action taking place. There have been meetings with expert attorneys and actuaries, with politicians (state and federal), and the media.

The trustees of the fund denied the RC access to most of the documents we have requested so that we could have a meaningful claim review hearing. Our claim was that we would suffer financially if the fund made the proposed changes. We think this is an easy claim to prove. A young person starting full-time employment at UPS will donate 35 percent of his yearly contribution until he has 15 years seniority, and then 20 percent until he is 51 years old, to the defined benefit plan. He will receive nothing in return. This could easily amount to \$250,000 at seven percent interest that will **not** be deposited in his defined contribution plan. Our claim was denied!

Some of the locals involved have finally taken action. They plan to file an injunction to prevent the Reading Local 429 officials who dominate the fund from making any immediate changes.

Some local officers are supporting the Central Pennsylvania Teamster Pension Reform Committee's quest for a better pension for all members of the fund. But the Reform Committee has to continue on its own. The last time the locals threatened legal action they dropped their suit because Reading finally added a trustee from outside their local.

The Reform Committee is determined to win pension justice and equity for all Teamsters.

Pension 'Re-employment' Rules Discriminate

Various Teamster pension funds have widely varying and confusing rules that disqualify Teamsters who are "re-employed" from collecting their pension. The problem is getting worse rather than better, especially for Teamsters who retire early under 25-and-out or other such programs.

Many Teamster funds will try to block a member from collecting their pension if they take another job. Some have complicated rules on what kinds of jobs a retiree can take. Originally this was intended to prevent a Teamster retiree from working at a nonunion competitor, such as Overnite Transportation. But they have broadened the rules to include almost any employment.

The rules vary greatly in different Teamster pension plans. The two largest Teamster funds, for example, have different rules. In the Western Conference Pen-

sion Fund, a Teamster can take any job at all and still draw their full pension, but only after age 65. In the Central States Fund, a very strict rule applies even after age 65.

ERISA, the federal pension law, does provide some protection, but not enough.

Teamster plans that cover only Teamster officials have a very liberal policy. So an International official can retire in the Retirement and Family Protection Plan (which covers only IBT officials, giving them a multiple pension) with a huge sum, and then work anywhere they want, including in management labor relations or even union busting.

The situation calls for reform. We need fair and uniform rules. Early retirement in the 21st century frequently means the retiree is going to do some kind of work; our pension plans need to catch up to the times.

Hoffa's Port Director Indicted for Embezzlement

Boston Local 25 President and Port Division Director George Cashman was indicted along with the Local 25 vice president on Jan. 17 on 179 counts of conspiracy, embezzlement, and bribery for trying to defraud Local 25's health and welfare fund. The charges arise out of a two-and-a-half-year federal investigation into corruption and racketeering in the local.

Cashman is charged with conspiring with the owners of three area trucking companies to list 19 people, including relatives of the trucking company owners and at least one reputed mob associate, as Local 25 members, and to put them down for bogus hours to make them eligible for Teamster health benefits.

Soon after Cashman's release on \$25,000 bail, Massachusetts Acting Governor Jane Swift forced him to resign his

post on the board of the Mass. Port Authority, a powerful patronage appointment he had held since 1993.

Cashman also serves as president of New England Joint Council 10, Hoffa's Port Director, and on the UPS National Negotiating Committee.

The January indictments are the first charges to be handed up by a federal grand jury that has also been focusing on allegations that Teamster officials extorted Hollywood producers who filmed in New England. Although none of the indictments allege wrongdoing by Teamsters involved in the movie industry, law enforcement officials quoted in the *Boston Globe* said that more charges are expected from the ongoing investigation by the Department of Labor's racketeering division, Drug Enforcement Administration, and State Police.

IBT Independent Auditor Gone

In January, federal judge Loretta Preska allowed the International Union to remove an Independent Auditor who reviewed union expenditures. The Auditor had been in place for the past four years.

The auditor performed little or no useful review, and was paid out of our treasury. The Hoffa administration hailed the removal of the auditor.

Removal of the auditor does not impact the terms of the 1989 Consent Decree in any way. Hoffa is lobbying Capitol Hill for an end to government oversight.

The accounting firm that designed the financial controls in effect for the Hoffa administration is none other than Arthur Andersen, the same firm that is deeply implicated in the Enron corporate scandal.

Save the Date!

2002 TDU Convention

Nov. 1-3

Cleveland Airport Sheraton

Make plans now to attend the most important Teamster event of the year. See future issues of Convoy Dispatch for more information.

Reform Activists Gather in Detroit

A Roadmap for the Future

Over 90 Teamster leaders and activists from across our union gathered in Detroit the weekend of February 9-10 to evaluate last year's election campaign and to chart a course for our movement for the coming year.

"This meeting was important to set the tone for the year ahead," said TDU co-chair Joe Fahey. "We look forward to spending less time on union politics and more time on doing what TDU does best — keeping members informed, fighting for better contracts, and organizing to enforce our rights."

Building TDU was a main theme of the weekend. In their opening remarks, both reform leader Tom Leedham and TDU National Organizer Ken Paff stressed the importance of a strong TDU as a key to a strong Teamsters Union where rank and file Teamsters' voices are heard. Following the opening remarks, attendees broke into smaller groups to discuss TDU chapter building and recruitment.

Focus on Contract Fights, Dues Hike

The UPS contract campaign and Hoffa's proposed dues increase provided an action-oriented framework for discussing TDU's plans for the months ahead.

TDU co-chair Dan Campbell outlined key union and management goals for the UPS contract in a Saturday morning plenary session. Afterwards, activists caucused to share ideas on building a rank and file campaign to inform and involve as many members as possible and exert maximum pressure on the company.

On Sunday, members discussed how to respond to Hoffa's call for a special convention to raise dues. Members voiced strong support for a stronger strike fund and increased financing for new organizing. But members also insisted that members must have the right to vote on the issue and that IBT leaders have to cut the fat and demonstrate fiscal responsibility to justify a dues increase.

Coming out of the weekend, TDU's International Steering Committee passed a motion calling for "any proposed dues increase to be submitted for ratification to the entire Teamster membership." The motion also proposed that TDU "immediately move to organize a campaign on the issue."

Big Picture

While session workshops focused on immediate plans for members to take

home with them, the meeting was also an opportunity to view TDU's work within a broader context. Keynote speaker Ken Riley, President of International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422 and a leader of the successful campaign to free the "Charleston Five," told of how TDU's experiences inspired him to help found a similar reform movement in the ILA, the Longshore Workers' Coalition. *Labor Notes* co-editor Jane Slaughter and TDU organizer David Levin

wrapped up the weekend with a look at the current labor and economic situation, and TDU's role in the labor movement.

"I went to Detroit because I wanted to learn more about how to build TDU so we can fight for stronger contracts and better representation," said Bob Linkenhoker of Baltimore Local 355. "The meetings and workshops helped me get a better sense of how to do that. I'm already using some of the things I learned in my shop back home. I'm glad I came."

Chicago Members Propose Bylaws Reforms

TDU members and others in Chicago Local 705 are campaigning to enact four changes to their local union bylaws to make the big local stronger and more democratic.

The changes would provide for electing some members to each local bargaining committee; "battle pages" to allow candidates for local office space in the union newspaper before local elections; a 14-point Members' Bill of Rights; and for a lead organizer to give monthly reports

and annual budgets to the members.

Last year Local 705 members adopted a bylaws proposal to ensure elected stewards. The first formal stewards elections will occur in April. Many Local 705 members are heartened with that change, after a few years when bylaws proposals on that issue fell short of adoption.

Democratic bylaws can help involve members to participate in their local's future, and build a stronger and more united local.

Western Region Holding Meeting in Honolulu

Does This Look Like Your Work Schedule?

Below is the work schedule of Teamster officers and staff as the Western Region meets in Honolulu at the exotic Hyatt Regency-Waikiki.

Monday, Feb. 18

Morning Session 9 a.m. - noon
Lunch Noon - 1:30 p.m.
Afternoon Session 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 19

Morning Session 9a.m. - noon
Lunch Noon - 1:30 p.m.
Afternoon Session 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 20

Morning Session 9a.m. - noon
Lunch Noon - 1:30 p.m.
Afternoon Session 1:30 - 3:30p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 21

General Session 8a.m. - noon

Friday, Feb. 22

General Session 8a.m. - noon

Whew! These 23-hour work weeks in Honolulu must be exhausting for our leaders. No wonder they need more money from us.

But don't worry about our Teamster leaders. They know how to have a good time despite this grueling schedule. An outfit called Health Management Center, Inc. (HMC) is treating them to a cocktail party on the pool terrace at the Hyatt Regency on Tuesday, Feb. 19. On Thursday they are treating them to a real party. Here's how they describe it:

"Our chartered luxury buses will board you at the Hyatt Regency for a scenic drive to Paradise Cove. Once there, you will participate in outrigger canoe rides, Hawaiian-style fishing with throwing nets in a lagoon teeming with fighting fish, spear-throwing, Island craft-making, temporary Hawaiian tatoos, Polynesian bowling, coconut tree climbing, Mai-Tai sipping, traditional pig pit raising, and goosebump raising, throbbing Hawaiian entertainment accompanying the best outdoor luau dinner between the West Coast and the Phillipines."

As HMC says, "There may be no such thing as a free lunch, but in Hawaii there is a free luau and cocktail party." Apparently HMC is like a USO for stranded Teamster leaders forced to spend a week in Hawaii. Certainly they have no ulterior motive for their largess.

To relieve the stress of the week's work our Teamster leaders are being treated on Thursday between 10 a.m. and noon (mid-session) to free Hula lessons, and one session ended with a Power Point slide that read, "See you on the golf course."

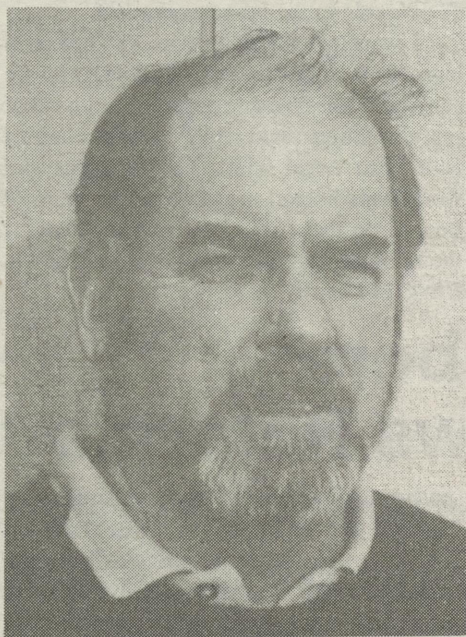
Even though Vice President Jim Santangelo repeatedly stresses how important it is to attend all the sessions, many empty seats have been noticed at the afternoon sessions. Meanwhile, the needs of Teamsters back home are being neglected. Striking workers at Interna-

tional Window were told by their Local 986 business agent that they would be "too busy" to deliver strike checks to the

picket line the week of the Hawaiian festivities. The strikers will just have to wait another week to get their strike checks.



Teamsters Speak Out on Dues Increase Proposal



"I agree that there needs to be a strong strike fund, especially with the UPS negotiations looming. But I disagree with a hefty and permanent increase in every member's dues."

"In our Local 372, we came into office this year and found that the previous administration went \$57,000 into the red last year, and we've had to cut back. For example, we have no travel expenses in our 2002 budget. The International needs to consider cutting the fat."

"I could support money strictly for a strike fund. I could support a temporary dues increase. But let the membership vote!"

Dennis Nazelli
Local 372 Secretary-Treasurer
Detroit

"A strong strike fund may be an important tool to strengthen our union, but members are more important. A dues increase is a big deal to most members. If members don't have a say in this dues increase then some may choose to withdraw from the union in right-to-work states. As Vice President of my local I feel it is my duty to demand that the membership have the right to vote a dues increase up or down. Without that how can we fulfill the commitments we made to our members?"

Milton Byrd
Local 667 Vice President
Memphis



"Only \$2 a month is needed to provide strike benefits of \$200 a week to every single Teamster. But under this proposal, even though my dues would go up \$5 a month, I will only get \$100 a week in strike benefits. Hoffa's strike benefit formula discriminates against low-wage Teamsters. Our union should be fighting against two-tier contracts, not implementing two-tier strike benefits."

Guillermina Martinez
Local 556, IBP
Pasco, Wash.



"The strike fund does need to be fixed, but not at an unreasonable expense to the members. Organizing is also important, and should be made a priority by the International, not just an excuse to raise our dues."

"Above all, democracy should prevail, and the members should vote on the amount of the dues increase and what it should be used for."

Frank Halstead
Local 572, Ralph's Grocery
Los Angeles



"The Hoffa Unity Slate knows that the problem isn't that the members pay too little in dues; the problem is that the International spends too much."

James Hoffa
Teamster magazine
July/August 1998



Circulate the petition for the right to vote on any proposed dues increase.

See page 5 for more information.